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aspire

age
sector
platform

speaking from experience

Launch of the Pensioners Trust



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Chair Francis Hughes

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Message from the Chair

Hello and welcome to a very special edition of *aspire*, and my first as Chair of the Platform!

I am honoured to have been elected as the new Chair during September and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Patricia Donald for all her hard work as Chairperson over the last two years. I hope to be able to follow her great example during the next two years.

This edition of *aspire* features a report from our recent AGM and an article about the launch of the Pensioners Trust, a new fund that I hope you will be able to promote and support!

The rest of this edition is dedicated to the work plans of Age Sector Platform's Campaign Committees. Each article is written by the committee chair, and outlines what that committee will be working on in the coming year.

I look forward to working on your behalf in the months and years ahead to ensure that pensioner issues are given the priority they deserve.

I hope you enjoy this edition!



Francis Hughes



The Platform's Seventh AGM

Age Sector Platform's seventh Annual General Meeting took place on Tuesday 24 September 2013 in the Europa Hotel, Belfast. Around 80 people gathered for the AGM with a broad representation of older people from groups and networks across Northern Ireland.

As part of the business section of the AGM, a new Executive Committee member was elected – Tony Damoglou from the Civil Service Pensioners Alliance (CSPA). No other nominations were received for the committee and so Nixon Armstrong and Victor Murphy have happily agreed to stay on the committee for an extra year.

Three officer positions were vacated, with Patricia Donald stepping down as Chair; Francis Hughes as Vice-Chair and Anne Watson as Secretary.

Francis and Anne were, however, nominated and elected as Chair and Vice Chair of Age Sector Platform respectively. Congratulations to both individuals – they have been involved in the organisation for many years and will undoubtedly make a great partnership. Patricia Donald will remain on the Executive Committee for another year.

During the AGM, Platform CEO Eddie Lynch updated members on the progress made during the last year – outlining the success of the 2013 Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament, providing an overview of the charity's campaign work and highlighting the role of campaign committees and members in supporting the work of the charity.

Speaking about the review of campaign committees, Eddie emphasised the need to focus on the 'big issues' that are of concern to older people. Read more about the work of each of the five new campaign committees on pages 6 - 15.



Cover Photo:

Pictured at the launch of the Pensioners Trust are Michael Monaghan, Chair of NI Pensioners Parliament, and charity patrons Baroness May Blood MBE and Malachi O'Doherty

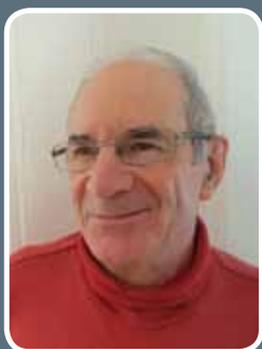
Eddie continued by highlighting the important role that members have in promoting campaigns and disseminating information amongst their groups. He suggested that some members may wish to have a speaker from Age Sector Platform come along to an upcoming meeting to renew their relationship with the Platform. He also highlighted the need for groups to distribute their copies of **aspire** throughout the year to ensure that their members are kept up-to-date with Platform news and campaigns.

Eddie finished by paying tribute to Patricia Donald for her hard work and commitment as Chair of Age Sector Platform. Describing her as a “big defender of the West and a passionate advocate of women”. Eddie thanked Patricia for her effortless leadership, her solid advice and her passion for helping older people who may be less well off.

New Chair, Francis Hughes, presented Patricia Donald with a gift in appreciation of all her hard work as Chair of Age Sector Platform during the last two years.



WELCOME
Executive Committee Member
Tony Damoglou (CSPA)



Tony joined Civil Service Pensioners Alliance (CSPA) NI Branch Committee in 2002 and is currently Honorary Secretary.

He has been involved with Age Sector Platform since its inception and is a current Member of the Pensioners Parliament (MPP). He currently sits on the Health and Care Sub Committees of the Platform and of CSPA-UK.



Launch of the Pensioners Trust

During September, Age Sector Platform launched the Pensioners Trust - a unique fund set up to engage with older people and support projects that will improve their lives. This charity and its members know that extra resources are needed to properly tackle the concerns currently facing the older population in Northern Ireland, and the Pensioners Trust will seek to address that.

Michael Monaghan, Chair of the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament, commented: “We have reached a cross-road at which we must decide how future generations will live their later years.”

“Government has a leading role in supporting people as they grow older, however with reduced government spending and an increasing number of older people, it is everyone’s responsibility to invest in a future where older people are not worried about keeping warm in winter, fear being a victim of crime, or feel lonely.”



Baroness May Blood MBE and Malachi O'Doherty pictured at the launch event with Chair of Age Sector Platform Francis Hughes, Vice-Chair Anne Watson and Chair of NI Pensioners Parliament, Michael Monaghan

“We are calling on businesses and individuals to help ensure that the problems facing pensioners today will not continue to be worries for future generations. The Pensioners Trust is about investing in everyone’s future; regardless of gender, religion or race.”



Michael Monaghan speaking at the launch of the Pensioners Trust

“We hope that in the years to come the Pensioners Trust will produce huge dividends for future generations of pensioners.”

As part of the launch of the Pensioners Trust, Age Sector Platform introduced its new charity patrons – Member of the House of Lords, Baroness May Blood MBE; and writer and broadcaster, Malachi O'Doherty.



Age Sector Platform's charity patrons, Baroness May Blood MBE and Malachi O'Doherty, speaking at the launch of the Pensioners Trust

Baroness May Blood MBE commented: "I am delighted to become a champion for Age Sector Platform and its work. Ensuring the voice of older people is heard and acted upon is more important than ever before. We must harness the voting power of the older generation to influence government and policy makers; those who can make a real difference to the lives of older people here."

Malachi O'Doherty commented: "I am proud to have been invited to be a patron of Age Sector Platform. In recent years, I have had the pleasure of meeting several older people involved in the charity and know how passionate they are about tackling issues such as fuel poverty, fear of crime and health and social care. I think it is important that older people have a voice and that their voice is heard."

View more photographs from the launch of the Pensioners Trust by visiting the Age Sector Platform website at www.agesectorplatform.org and clicking on 'photo gallery'.

The success of the Pensioners Trust will be dependent on the support given by Age Sector Platform members and supporters in helping to promote it amongst family, friends and local businesses. Leaflets containing further information for individual donors and for businesses are available from the Age Sector Platform office, and can also be downloaded from the website at www.agesectorplatform.org.

If you want more information on the Pensioners Trust, or would like to request a batch of leaflets to distribute, please phone 028 9031 2089 or email info@agesectorplatform.org.



Heating and eating still top concerns

By Francis Hughes, Chair of Making Ends Meet Campaign Committee



Making ends meet is the single biggest concern for older people in Northern Ireland, and I am honoured to be chair of the committee leading our campaigning efforts in this area.

Essentially this committee will cover two things: energy prices and food prices. Coming back to the phrase that is often used – it's a matter of heating or eating. Unfortunately, that is a very sad, but real decision for many pensioners living in Northern Ireland today.

The 2013 Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament survey revealed that the top two concerns for pensioners here are energy prices and food prices. Four out of five pensioners said they were concerned about energy prices, whilst two out of three selected food prices as a top concern.

The issue of keeping warm in winter is a particularly relevant one as we approach the coldest months of the year. We know that cold temperatures have more serious implications for older people, demonstrated by the fact that during the 2011/2012 winter all of the 496 excess winter deaths were people over the age of 65.

Fuel poverty in Northern Ireland is rife, with 42 per cent of households living in fuel poverty. Of these households, almost half are headed by someone over the age of 60. Although Age Sector Platform has been highlighting these sorts of statistics for some time, the NI Executive still has not grasped the seriousness of the fuel poverty situation amongst older people.

This committee will be asking one very important question at every opportunity during this coming year - why have energy prices been ignored in the fuel poverty debate? There are three contributing factors that influence levels of fuel poverty – energy efficiency of homes, income levels and energy prices. The NI Executive has very little power in affecting income levels of pensioners here, since decisions regarding pensions and benefits are made at Westminster. It has focussed a lot of attention on the energy efficiency of homes through the Warm Homes Scheme and Boiler Replacement Scheme. However, the third strand – energy prices – continues to be ignored.

As I write this article, the Labour Party has announced its intention to freeze energy bills for 20 months if they win the general election in 2015. In doing so, Labour has acknowledged the difficulties facing



households across the UK in paying their energy bills. Our NI Executive is aware of the fatal consequences that low temperatures and high energy prices can have on our older people; but has refused to explore ways in which energy companies might be able to help vulnerable customers. This must change.

The Making Ends Meet campaign committee will meet with the responsible government departments and other organisations that work in this field, to discuss their plans for tackling the high cost of energy.

The 'Silver Saver' campaign was developed in response to the high levels of concern amongst pensioners in regards to food prices. The campaign, which began with a public petition, calls on food retailers to introduce a pensioner discount day to help older shoppers cope with the rising cost of living and enable them to maintain a balanced and healthy diet. For more information, or to sign the petition, visit www.silversaver.org.uk.



During the last year, we have amassed a great deal of public and political support for the campaign, with almost 10,000 signatures collected for the petition and the majority of councils and MLAs officially declaring their backing for the campaign.

The next step will be to engage with supermarkets and food retailers. This committee will seek to have meetings with all the main food retailers in Northern Ireland to discuss the issue of food prices, and the wider area of customer care for older people. The committee may also look at the possibility of how smaller food shops can register as 'Silver Saver' supporters, if they currently offer a discount or intend to introduce one as part of the campaign.

If you are aware of any local shops that currently offer a discount for pensioners, feel free to inform the committee through the Age Sector Platform office on 028 9031 2089 or email info@agesectorplatform.org.

Energy prices and food prices are the two biggest concerns for pensioners. On behalf of the Making Ends Meet Campaign Committee, I assure you that these issues will remain priorities in our programme of work over the next year and beyond.

Committee Reports

Universal benefits under threat at Westminster

By Nixon Armstrong, Chair of Westminster Campaign Committee



Although most of the issues affecting pensioners in Northern Ireland are devolved matters i.e. they are the responsibility of the Northern Ireland Assembly; there are some issues that are controlled by the UK Government at Westminster. These include pensions and benefits.

Age Sector Platform represents Northern Ireland pensioners at a UK level through a number of ways. Lobbying our Northern Ireland MPs who sit in the House of Commons is the best way we can ensure our views are represented at Westminster.

Every year, members of the Westminster Campaign Committee travel to London to meet with a cross-party group of Northern Ireland MPs. In the past, as part of this trip, we have also arranged meetings with other 'key players' in Westminster, such as the Pensions Minister, Shadow Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the Chairperson of the Work and Pensions Select Committee to name a few. We have also discussed pensioners' issues with a group of Northern Ireland Peers, who sit in the House of Lords.

Age Sector Platform also represents NI pensioners on a number of important UK bodies. I attend meetings of the Age Action Alliance, and Michael Monaghan from the committee attends the UK Advisory Forum on Ageing. These meetings allow us to learn more about incoming government policies and to network with other UK pensioners' organisations; whilst providing the views of older people here emanating from the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament.



One piece of government policy which is currently in the process of becoming law is the new Pensions Bill which was introduced into Parliament in May 2013, and which is expected to receive Royal Assent by spring 2014. This Bill will reform the pensions system introducing a new flat-rate pension, automatic enrolment and bringing forward the increase in the state pension age to 67 between 2026 and 2028.

These reforms, however, will not affect current pensioners; who will remain on the existing system of means-tested benefits. We believe this is unfair, and we will continue to highlight this point with our MPs and Peers.

Age Sector Platform has campaigned for a decent state pension for several years, and we will continue to do so. In terms of future pensioners, there are many that will lose out under the new pension reforms, and it is important that our politicians continue to be made aware of these.

Over the last year, many of the main UK political parties have suggested that universal pensioner benefits, for example the Winter Fuel Payment, could be under threat following the next general election in 2015.



Numerous myths have been popularised by politicians and media outlets, and we believe that now is the time to convince all political parties that these benefits are essential for achieving a decent standard of living for pensioners in the UK. Our committee will embark on a UK-wide campaign defending the need for these benefits, which we hope will be launched before the next edition of *aspire*.

This committee will be calling on your support in the coming months, and I hope that we can ensure this campaign gets the attention it deserves – from politicians and the media. We want to dispel myths such as ‘the norm of the millionaire pensioner’ that are currently being peddled by politicians in Westminster, who clearly do not know anything about the hardship being experienced by pensioners across the UK, including Northern Ireland.

I hope I can count on your support for this important campaign in the coming months. As I write this article, we have around 580 days until the general election. Let’s make sure we use each one productively to ensure those at Westminster know what we want from the next UK Government.

Making our voice heard on health reform

By Robert Hasson, Chair of Health Campaign Committee



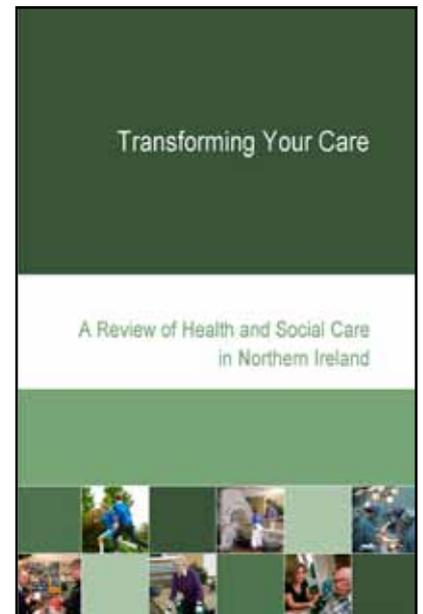
Age Sector Platform welcomed the announcement in June 2011 from the Minister of Health, Edwin Poots MLA, that a review of the provision of health and social care would be undertaken. The Minister, when announcing the review, said that it was clear that the range of health and social care services was unsustainable in its current form.

Discussion and anecdotal evidence at the 2011 Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament informed us that the health service required a major overhaul as the system struggled to deliver essential Health and Social Care services to older people and the population in general.

Consequently, the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament supported the aspirations contained in 'A Review of Health and Social Care in Northern Ireland' or 'Transforming Your Care' (TYC) as presented by John Compton, Chair of the Review Team who was appointed by the Health Minister.

An important feature of the review that appealed to older people was the policy to shift care from institutional settings to home and community settings, along with the key principle that home should be the hub of care for older people.

Since the publication of the review, this Health Campaign Committee has been monitoring its progress. The volume of documentation coming from the Minister and his department has been immense, and there is no doubt that our committee of older people has found it challenging to keep on top of it all. There is great difficulty in keeping up to speed with this process and all its possible implications - positive or negative.



The planned changes to health and social care dominated discussions at all seven local Pensioners Parliaments held earlier this year in each county. Access to health and social care was also revealed as a major concern for older people by the 2013 Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament survey. In fact, concern surrounding this issue has risen dramatically over the last year; with less than one third of pensioners selecting it as a concern in 2012; increasing to almost half of pensioners by 2013.

It is clear that older people are greatly concerned about the possible impact these changes will have for them as they grow older and need convincing that the appropriate resources are in place to ensure high quality care is maintained in the coming years.

Concerns raised during local parliaments led to a motion being presented and passed at this year's NI Pensioners Parliament regarding the need for an Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) to be carried out as a matter of urgency to establish the full impact of the proposals on older people.

As the largest user group in the health service, it is vital that older people are assured that any changes to health and social care services will not lead to a decrease in care standards. In fact, the new system must lead to better quality health care for older people.

There has been a great deal of anxiety and stress experienced by residents of statutory residential care homes following the recent closure announcements by the Health Trusts. These announcements and the subsequent public debate have increased concerns amongst the older population, causing many to lose confidence in the review process.



Age Sector Platform is currently working with the Health and Social Care Board to ensure older people are able to have their say in relation to this matter. As I write this article, consultation events are being organised to allow Members of the Pensioners Parliament to provide their views on the proposed criteria for evaluating current statutory residential homes. These events will give older people a further opportunity to engage with the Health and Social Care Board on this important matter.

On behalf of the Health Campaign Committee, I would like to thank everyone who provided their views on health and social care through the NI Pensioners Parliament. Your views have given this committee a real mandate to speak on behalf of older people here in Northern Ireland. I hope that with continued dedication and hard work, our committee will make a truly positive impact on the future of health and social care.

Committee Reports

Slow progress on important issues

By Margaret Galloway, Chair of OFMdFM Campaign Committee



The Office of the First Minister and deputy First Minister (OFMdFM) is the department with overall responsibility for older people. It is charged with tackling disadvantage and promoting equality of opportunity by directing a programme across Government to promote and protect our interests as older people.

Age Sector Platform's OFMdFM Campaign Committee is tasked with monitoring and influencing two areas of work within this programme – the development of the Active Ageing Strategy and the introduction of legislation to outlaw age discrimination in the provision of goods and services.

The Active Ageing Strategy is a document which has been in development for many years. Several Age Sector Platform members, including myself, have been involved in advising OFMdFM Officials via the 'Ageing Strategy Advisory Group', chaired initially by the Older People's Advocate, Dame Joan Harbison; and subsequently the Commissioner for Older People, Claire Keatinge.

The purpose of the strategy is to set the direction for NI Executive departments in relation to active ageing and to tackle the issues older people face through new projects.

Earlier this year, the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament provided some feedback to OFMdFM on the draft strategy, which has been used along with advice from the advisory group, to develop a strategy which is close to completion.

The Active Ageing Strategy is expected to be released for public consultation before the end of 2013. Therefore, one of the main pieces of work for the OFMdFM campaign committee will be to draft a response on behalf of Age Sector Platform and the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament.

It is our understanding that OFMdFM will also hold a series of consultation events during this period, and we will work to ensure Parliament participants and Age Sector Platform members know about and attend their local consultation event to provide their views.



The second piece of work for the committee will be to monitor and influence the passage of age discrimination legislation in the provision of goods and services.

Currently, age is the only equality strand where it is still lawful to discriminate against someone in the provision of goods and services. The introduction of this legislation could have huge implications in areas such as health care and insurance – where it is currently still legal to discriminate against someone based on their age.

This piece of legislation has been included in the NI Executive's Programme for Government, however, there has been some disagreement in regards to the scope of the legislation i.e. whether its purpose is to protect older people, or people of all ages, including young people.

During the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament in May, we raised our concerns with OFMdFM Junior Minister Jennifer McCann about the slow pace of progress with this legislation, and will continue to do so with Ministers and Officials from OFMdFM.



It is essential that this issue is progressed urgently so that older people can avail of the extra legal protection that the legislation will bring, by 2015 at the latest.

As Chair of the OFMdFM Campaign Committee, I am looking forward to a busy period ahead where older people's issues and legal rights take priority. Government strategies and legislation are not typically the most exciting of matters, but they do have the ability to dramatically improve the lives of older people here, and therefore we must ensure our voice is heard loud and clear.

Committee Reports

Tackling fear of crime

By Bill Carson, Chair of Fear of Crime Campaign Committee



Age Sector Platform has been campaigning in the area of community safety for many years. Since the establishment of the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament in 2011, it has become indisputably clear how important this area of work is, with around two out of three pensioners listing 'fear of crime' as a concern for them.

During the last six months we are pleased to have seen real progress, with the Justice Minister David Ford announcing a two year initiative to tackle fear of crime amongst older people.

The project, which is being funded by the Department of Justice and led by Age Sector Platform, will engage directly with older people to develop new ideas and solutions to address fear of crime.

As 'fear of crime' has remained a top issue of concern for older people during the past three years of the Pensioners Parliament, we are delighted that the Justice Minister has recognised this issue and committed to tackling it.

The involvement of older people in the design and delivery of the project is very welcome and is a unique opportunity for us to make sure we get it right – for every pensioner in Northern Ireland.

This Fear of Crime Campaign Committee is currently in the process of developing a programme of work to help tackle fear of crime and help older people to feel safe in their homes and communities.



Six themes have emerged through research conducted at the 2013 Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament, and these are the areas that our committee will be examining in order to develop a plan worthy of dealing with this huge issue.

The six themes include:

- Communication with older people
- Connections between older people and the police
- Vulnerability of older people
- Media impact on fear
- Anti-social behaviour and intergenerational issues
- Conviction rates and sentencing

Initially, it is important for our committee to have an understanding of the work currently being carried out by agencies within the area of community safety and justice. Therefore our intention is to meet with representatives from the PSNI, NI Policing Board, Policing and Community Safety Partnerships, Victim Support, NI Courts Service and other key players within this area.



These meetings should hopefully provide an overview of the work being carried out in the area of fear of crime amongst older people, and provide invaluable insights for our committee in relation to how these agencies work together.

The committee will also examine recent statistics in relation to crimes committed against older people, and identify the types of crime which are most common and the geographical areas which may be more prone to crimes against the older population.

In the future, the committee may look to develop a pilot scheme to tackle fear of crime which could be implemented in an area that currently has a higher rate of crimes against older people than other geographical areas. We look forward to getting to this stage of the process as quickly as possible.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all the members of the Fear of Crime Campaign Committee for their hard work and dedication. I pledge, on their behalf, that we will work as hard as we can to ensure fear of crime becomes a top priority for the police, courts and other community safety agencies.

Our vision is that fear of crime amongst older people becomes a thing of the past.

Member Spotlight

Mid & East Antrim Agewell Partnership (MEAAP)

MEAAP (Mid & East Antrim Agewell Partnership) sub regional network has been working in partnership to consult and plan the opportunities to help support older people's groups and individuals to improve the lives of older people in the Larne, Carrickfergus and Ballymena areas.

MEAAP has just launched their 'Ageing Well & Reaching Out' Project which has secured just over £495,000 funding from the Big Lottery's Reaching Out: Connecting Older People's Programme. This exciting three year project is a culmination of over four years hard work, with support from Age NI to consult with and design a project meeting the identified needs of older people in the three council districts.

The Big Lottery Funded Project, which commenced in July 2013 will provide services and support to older people through a Befriending and Good Morning Support programme, delivered by our partners Good Morning Ballymena and Good Morning East Antrim (covering Larne and Carrickfergus); advice, information and signposting through a dedicated Citizens Advice Bureau Older People Advisor; as well as provision of social activities, networking, rural road shows; and in years two and three the provision of a handyman service and development of luncheon clubs.



MEAAP Committee & Project Partners Citizens Advice Bureau, Good Morning Ballymena & Good Morning East Antrim

MEAAP since 2011

Following the establishment of the MEAAP Strategic Partnership, which offers statutory and voluntary organisations to become involved in shaping the opportunities for older people in the Mid & East Antrim Area, over 45 local representatives have been involved in shaping the Big Lottery bid and helping identify the gaps in service provision.

As well as listening to older people themselves, and involving statutory and voluntary organisations in planning for services for older people, MEAAP is also represented on the Northern Ireland Pensioners Parliament, as well as inputting directly into the Northern Health and Social Care Trust's policies through the Older People's Panel.

Member Spotlight

MEAAP has also championed the voice of older people in the on-going reform of health care, through both the 'Who Cares? The Future of Adult Care & Support in Northern Ireland' and the 'Transforming Your Care' consultations which took place in 2012/2013 all of which have resulted from the Compton Report. MEAAP is also hoping to represent the views of older people as part of the 'Integrated Care Partnerships' to ensure local issues are raised and older people are engaged with the right decision makers to strategically plan for the future.

The support and information available from Age Sector Platform has also proved extremely beneficial to MEAAP. Caroline McKeown, the MEAAP representative on the Age Sector Platform plenary group, has noted the opportunities to participate and champion campaigns such as the campaign on 'Fear of Crime'. It has also allowed MEAAP to network with the MLAs through the Pensioners Parliament, as well as gain information on other strategic partnerships and members to help create a united voice and increase opportunities for best practice, sharing and collaboration.



MEAAP Chairperson, Caroline McKeown, pictured with the political panel at the County Antrim Pensioners Parliament and Bill Carson from Age Sector Platform

The Future

At the launch event held on Tuesday 17 September 2013 in Drumalis Conference Centre in Larne, Caroline McKeown, MEAAP Chairperson, said that the successful Big Lottery bid is "just the start of what I hope will be a very exciting and fruitful future for older people living within the Ballymena, Larne and Carrickfergus areas."

"Much work is still required to meet the ever increasing and challenging needs facing those aged 60 and over in Northern Ireland, hence MEAAP will be hoping to engage with even more statutory and voluntary organisations to support our vision."

For further information on the MEAAP 'Ageing Well & Reaching Out' Programme or to get involved, please contact Project Development Officer Deirdre McCloskey on 028 2564 5676 or email info@meap.co.uk

Up for a laugh?

A tour bus driver is driving with a bus load of seniors down a motorway when he is tapped on his shoulder by a little old lady. She offers him a handful of peanuts, which he gratefully munches up.

After about 15 minutes, she taps him on his shoulder again and she hands him another handful of peanuts. She repeats this gesture about five more times.

When she is about to hand him another batch again he asks the little old lady, "Why don't you eat the peanuts yourself?"

"We can't chew them because we've no teeth", she replied.

The puzzled driver asks, "Why do you buy them then?"

The old lady replied, "We just love the chocolate around them."

Sudoku puzzle

	8		4	7		5	9	2
2		5	8					1
9	4	6						
7			3	6	5			8
					2	7		3
5			9		7	2	6	
						4	7	
				5	4			
		7	6	3	9	8		

The rules of Sudoku are surprisingly simple.

Every column, row, and 3×3 square must contain the numbers 1 through 9 exactly once.

Every Sudoku puzzle has exactly one solution that can be solved logically without guessing.

Good luck!

A trip down memory lane...50 years ago

Do you remember 1963?

January

Charles Haughey, Ireland's Minister for Justice, announces the government's intention to abolish the death penalty.

February

The Big Freeze of 1963 continues throughout February. It was one of the coldest winters on record in Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK.

March

Alcatraz Federal Penitentiary in San Francisco Bay, closes due to high running costs.

April

The USS Thresher, an atomic submarine, sinks in the Atlantic Ocean, killing 129 sailors and civilians off the coast of New England.

May

George Best signs for Manchester United at the age of 17.

June

President John F Kennedy visits Ireland for the first time. He visits Dublin, and his Great Grandfather's birth place in County Wexford.

July

The infamous 'Moors Murderers' begin their killing spree when a 16 year old is abducted by Ian Brady and Myra Hindley. The murders lasted over two years.

August

The Great Train Robbery takes place in Birmingham with £2.6m stolen. Meanwhile Martin Luther King Jnr gives his 'I have a Dream' speech at the Lincoln Memorial.

September

Belfast born poet and playwright, Louis MacNeice, dies after contracting pneumonia whilst living in a cave.

October

Belfast Aldergrove (now Belfast International Airport) opens as principal airport for Northern Ireland, transferring civilian facilities from Nutts Corner.

November

President John F Kennedy is assassinated in Dallas, Texas. The Beatles pay first visit to Northern Ireland, playing at the Ritz Cinema in Belfast.

December

The number one UK Christmas single is 'I want to hold your hand' by The Beatles.



Age Sector Platform Members

ABC Seniors Network
Age NI
Age North Down and Ards Over 50s Forum
ALLY Foyle
Belfast East Seniors Forum
Carers NI
Castlereagh Lifestyle Forum
Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance (CSPA)
COAST (Causeway Older Active Strategic Team)
Communications Workers Union (NI Regional Retired Members)
Engage with Age
GMB Retired Members
Greater Shankill Senior Citizens' Forum
Hoi Sum Chinese Elderly Group
ICTU Retired Workers Committee (NI)
Indian Community Centre 50+ Club
Mid and East Antrim AgeWell Partnership
Mid Ulster Seniors Network
NASUWT Retired Members Association
National Federation of Occupational Pensioners
National Pensioners Convention (NI)
Newry and Mourne Senior Citizens' Consortium
Newtownabbey Senior Citizens' Forum
NIPSA Retired Members Association
North Belfast Senior Citizens' Forum
North West Ageing Well Together (NNAWT)
Older Women's Network NI
Public Commercial Services Union (Associate and Retired Members)
South Belfast Lifestyle Forum
South West Age Partnership
UNISON Retired Members
Unite Retired Members
West Belfast 50+ Forum

If you have any feedback or would like to request additional copies of this newsletter, please get in touch.



Age Sector Platform
Merrion Business Centre
58 Howard Street
Belfast
BT1 6PJ

Tel: 028 9031 2089
Fax: 028 9033 2273
Email: info@agesectorplatform.org

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